

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for physically verifying a correct association between information printed on a closed face package and material and/or information  
5 contained inside the closed face package, the method comprising the steps of:
  - (a) providing a closed face package including a document inserted within the package, wherein the package has a window permitting a portion of the document to be read from a location outside of the package;
  - 10 (b) using a first reading device to read data printed on the package;
  - (c) using a second reading device to read document data, the document data having been printed on the inserted document and appearing through the window;
  - 15 (d) reading a data file to access account information stored therein corresponding to the document data;
  - (e) comparing at least a portion of the accessed account information with the package data to determine whether a matching association exists between the package data and the document data;
  - 20 (f) if the matching association is determined to exist, allowing the package to be further processed; and
  - (g) if the matching association is determined not to exist, preventing the package from being further processed.

2. The method according to claim 1 wherein the package is an envelope.

3. The method according to claim 1 wherein the package data is printed on a first side of the package and the window is located on the first  
5 side.

4. The method according to claim 1 wherein the package data is printed on a first side of the package and the window is located on an opposing second side of the package.

5. The method according to claim 1 wherein the first reading device  
10 reads the package data in a generally linear first direction and the second reading device reads the document data in a generally linear second direction generally transverse to the first direction.

6. The method according to claim 1 wherein at least one of the reading devices is an optical recognition device.

7. The method according to claim 1 wherein at least one of the  
15 reading devices is adapted to read data in Data Matrix format.

8. The method according to claim 1 wherein at least one of the reading devices is adapted to read data in Data Glyph format.

9. The method according to claim 1 wherein at least one of the reading devices is adapted to read data in Bar Code 39 format.

10. The method according to claim 1 wherein at least one of the reading devices is adapted to read data in OCR format.

5 11. The method according to claim 1 wherein at least one of the reading devices is adapted to read data in Post Net barcode format.

12. The method according to claim 1 wherein at least one of the reading devices is adapted to read data in Planet Code format.

10 13. The method according to claim 1 wherein at least one of the reading devices is adapted to read data in Interleaved 2 of 5 format.

14. The method according to claim 1 wherein at least one of the reading devices is adapted to read data in PDF 417 format.

15. The method according to claim 1 wherein the stored account information includes mail address information.

15 16. The method according to claim 1 comprising the step of indicating an error condition if the matching association is determined not to exist.

17. The method according to claim 16 wherein the step of indicating an error condition includes the step of displaying a human-readable error message.

18. The method according to claim 16 wherein the step of indicating  
5 an error condition includes the step of updating a database file with a print failure code.

19. The method according to claim 1 wherein the step of preventing  
the package from being further processed includes the step of rendering  
inoperable a mail processing machine by which the package is being  
10 processed.

20. The method according to claim 1 comprising the steps of reading  
a control code printed on the document and using the control code to locate the  
data file.

21. The method according to claim 1 comprising the steps of  
15 acquiring data representing address information from the stored account  
information, sending printing instructions to a printer, and causing the printer  
to print the address information on the closed face package.

22. The method according to claim 21 comprising the steps of determining at a predetermined point in time whether the printer has performed a printing operation on the closed face package, and causing the closed face package to be rejected if the printer has not performed the printing operation  
5 at the predetermined point in time.

23. A system for physically verifying a correct association between information printed on a closed face package and material and/or information contained inside the closed face package, the system comprising:

- 10 (a) a storage medium containing a data file, the data file including account information specific to a mail recipient;
- (b) an electronic processing apparatus adapted to access the data file and retrieve data forming a part of the account information; and
- 15 (c) an optical reader adapted to read data printed on a closed face package, the closed face package containing a document and including a window through which the document is visible, and to read document data printed on the document and visible through the window of the closed face package, wherein the optical reader is adapted to send the package data and the document data  
20 to the electronic processing apparatus.

24. The system according to claim 23 wherein the optical reader is operatively disposed downstream of a package printer.

25. The system according to claim 23 comprising first and second optical readers, the first optical reader adapted to read the package data and to send the package data to the electronic processing apparatus, and the second optical reader adapted to read the document data and to send the document data to the electronic processing apparatus.

26. The system according to claim 25 wherein the first optical reader is adapted to perform reading operations on a first side of the closed face package and the second optical reader is adapted to perform reading operations on the first side.

27. The system according to claim 25 wherein the first optical reader is adapted to perform reading operations on a first side of the closed face package and the second optical reader is adapted to perform reading operations on a second side of the closed face package.

28. The system according to claim 25 wherein the first optical reader reads the package data in a generally linear first direction and the second optical reader reads the document data in a generally linear second direction generally transverse to the first direction.

29. The system according to claim 23 wherein the electronic processing apparatus is adapted to read the package data and the document

data and determine whether a matching association exists between the package data and the document data.

30. A mailpiece processing system comprising:

- 5 (a) a mailpiece processing apparatus including a mail inserting device for inserting a document into a closed face package and a package printer for printing package data onto the closed face package;
- 10 (b) a storage medium containing a data file, the data file including account information specific to a mail recipient;
- (c) an electronic processing apparatus adapted to control operations of the mailpiece processing apparatus and to access the data file and retrieve data forming a part of the account information; and
- 15 (d) an optical reader adapted to read data printed on the closed face package, the closed face package containing the document inserted by the mail inserting device and including a window through which the document is visible, and to read document data printed on the document and visible through the window of the closed face package, wherein the optical reader is adapted to send the package data and the document data to the
- 20 electronic processing apparatus.

31. The system according to claim 30 wherein the optical reader is operatively disposed downstream of a package printer.

32. The system according to claim 30 comprising first and second optical readers, the first optical reader adapted to read the package data and to send the package data to the electronic processing apparatus, and the second optical reader adapted to read the document data and to send the document data to the electronic processing apparatus.

33. The system according to claim 32 wherein the first optical reader is adapted to perform reading operations on a first side of the closed face package and the second optical reader is adapted to perform reading operations on the first side.

34. The system according to claim 32 wherein the first optical reader is adapted to perform reading operations on a first side of the closed face package and the second optical reader is adapted to perform reading operations on a second side of the closed face package.

35. The system according to claim 32 wherein the first optical reader reads the package data in a generally linear first direction and the second optical reader reads the document data in a generally linear second direction generally transverse to the first direction.

36. The system according to claim 30 wherein the electronic processing apparatus is adapted to read the package data and the document



data and determine whether a matching association exists between the package data and the document data.

37. A computer program product adapted for physically verifying a correct association between information printed on a closed face package and material and/or information contained inside the closed face package, wherein the closed face package includes a document inserted within the package and the package has a window permitting a portion of the document to be read from a location outside of the package, the computer program product comprising computer-executable instructions embodied in a computer-readable medium for performing steps comprising:
- (a) receiving package data, the package data printed on the closed face package and read from the package by a first reading device;
  - (b) receiving document data, the document data printed on the inserted document and appearing through the window of the package;
  - (c) reading a data file to access account information stored therein corresponding to the document data;
  - (d) comparing at least a portion of the accessed account information with the package data to determine whether a matching association exists between the package data and the document data;

- (e) if the matching association is determined to exist, allowing the package to be further processed; and
- (f) if the matching association is determined not to exist, preventing the package from being further processed.

5           38.    The computer program product according to claim 37 comprising causing the first reading device to read the package data in a generally linear first direction and causing the second reading device to read the document data in a generally linear second direction generally transverse to the first direction.

10           39.    The computer program product according to claim 37 comprising indicating an error condition if the matching association is determined not to exist.

            40.    The computer program product according to claim 39 wherein the step of indicating an error condition includes the step of displaying a human-  
15   readable error message.

            41.    The computer program product according to claim 39 wherein the step of indicating an error condition includes the step of updating a database file with a print failure code.

42. The computer program product according to claim 37 wherein the step of preventing the package from being further processed includes the step of rendering inoperable a mail processing machine by which the package is being processed.

5           43. The computer program product according to claim 37 comprising receiving a control code read from the document and using the control code to locate the data file.

10           44. The computer program product according to claim 37 comprising acquiring data representing address information from the stored account information, sending printing instructions to a printer, and causing the printer to print the address information on the closed face package.

15           45. The computer program product according to claim 44 comprising determining at a preset point in time whether the printer has performed a printing operation on the closed face package, and causing the closed face package to be rejected if the printer has not performed the printing operation at the predetermined point in time.